

RELIGIOSITY IN CULTURAL CONTEXT: EXPLORATIVE ANALYSES OF RUSSIAN-SPEAKING YOUTH IN GERMANY

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The paper is based on the research conducted in Germany, Bayreuth University in 2010 (under DAAD support) under the supervision of Prof. Bochinger. The research included exploring of individual religiosity of youth as a subjective side of religion, its subjective appropriation and its dependence on different cultural contexts. Methodological aspect of the project oriented not only on the level of involvement of young people into religious experience, but on the opportunity to find out religious or spiritual aspects in the sphere of cultural identification. Youth of different religious affiliations and those who consider themselves not religious were involved into project.

In Germany there is large Russian-speaking group which is considered as «Russians» mostly because of language they speak. In fact they arrived from different countries of former Soviet Union and have different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. But here, in Germany they are constructed by others like Russian group and they somehow except this externally constructed identity. It can be useful for further study of youth religious identity to get a picture of particular case of contextual influence or its absence. I'm looking forward exploring if there is some Russian cultural influence in construction religious identity of this group.

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We used method of in-depth interviews for data collection and A. Strauss' grounded theory for its interpretation.

The research was focused on the group of Russian-speaking females who came from Russia or former Soviet Republics with their parents from 4 to 19 years ago.

The age limits are from 20 to 30 because:

I consider this age as a period of making individual decisions and choices.

This age is less involved into institutional religion.

16 interviews have been conducted with females of the following 3 groups:

1. Ethnic Germans who came with their parents – 11.
2. Jewish who came with their parents– 1.
3. Russians who came by themselves through social and education programs – 4.

The first data analysis shows the following results:

Russian identification is connected with language, behavior and appearance and based on external identification – friends, Germans, etc. (the whole Russian-speaking group is considered as «Russians» here).

Antithesis with Germans, German culture is the mostly important basis for self-identification.

Religious flexibility – absence of strict connection with any religious organizations, openness for changing religious affiliations.

It's possible to divide first data observations into two main directions – cultural identity and religious identity. As we mentioned above this age group is far from strict connection with organized religious groups and doesn't consider religion as an important aspect of everyday life. That's why we divided obtained results into two major groups – cultural and religious identity construction.

Cultural identity and its components

1. Language.

The most important and frequently used component of identification became language.

Identification through language can be confirmed by the following conclusions from conducted interviews:

I'm Russian because I speak **Russian language**.

I can't date or get married with German because he speaks **another language**.

Germans also didn't like us because we were speaking **Russian**.

Russian culture = **Russian language**.

The interesting fact is that this Russian-speaking group has a second level of identification. They identify themselves through German's identification based on language they use. It can be interpreted as external grounds of identification, not fully recognized and accepted.

Also the interesting fact is connection between language and Russian culture. Russian culture was usually explained through linguistic belonging. Further it could be checked is it only upper level of identification or Russian language really possesses cultural meaning for young adults.

2. Behavior.

Behavior is also mentioned as a very important component of identification and used on the basis of contradiction with Germans:

Russians help to each other never stay those who need help – this type of behavior is usually used like a contradiction with German's style. Russians are explained as more collective, helpful and friendly to each other. Many examples from everyday life confirm special Russian type of behavior by means of active position in critical situation when somebody need help.

Fighting between Russians, between Russians and Germans, biting in families (children, wife) – such type of behavior also has some kind of contradiction, but mostly has an emotional characteristics as danger for Germans and confirm distance.

Celebrations, holidays are depicted in interviews as a special sphere of life, where Russians can implement their lifestyle. Special manner of celebration can even become a course of deviation between Russian and German friends: *...We were friends from school (with German girl), but I don't communicate with her any longer because there were no music and dancing on her wedding...*

Inner world.

This point is really interesting and worth more detailed studying. The important thing is absence of clear source and background of such ideas as:

Russian soul, «special» temperament (like Italians, like Americans), «special» mentality, light of soul, freedom: *...In behavior I'm German, in soul I'm Russian...* These ideas are close to Russian religious philosophy but it's obvious that most of respondents have never heard about it. We have a hypothesis that the idea of so-called «Russian soul» and similar ones are based on experience of acquaintance with Russian classical literature.

Openness is confirmed by such phrases: *...It's easy to make friends with Russians. You are friends today and you can celebrate today together or do everything together...; ...Russians are more open, they are always ready to help and support...*

4. Appearance.

Clothes as characteristic can be marked as dominant in identification process. It is even confirmed by special fashioned pictures in social network «Odnoklassniki» («Classmates») which respondents change mostly every day and add comments to each other. 3 respondents tried

themselves as foto-models, 2 have a profession of dress-designer, 1 – hair-designer.

Importance of clothes can be illustrated by such characteristics as: *...You can always recognize Russians here because of how they are look like...; ...On discos Russians are always dressed up, Germans can come just in jeans and T-shirts...; ...German ladies don't use make up and wear «grey» clothes...*

Religious identity and its components.

As we mentioned above religious identity is not obvious from interviews data, but it's possible to mark out several regularities.

1. Religious identity of young adult females can be characterized as fuzzy and flexible. Christian identity is common for most of them. But there is absence of any difference between Lutheran, Catholic and Orthodox churches: *...I was baptized in Russia... I don't know – in Protestant church. Protestant is Orthodox, yes? Ok, I don't know...; ...I'm going to baptize my further child in Orthodox church, but I'm going to have wedding in Lutheran...; ...I'm Evangelic here, but I like Orthodox Russian churches more. You come in to Orthodox Church and feel a special warm atmosphere, a light of soul...;*

Even Synagogue is becoming natural component of religious affiliation: *...When we arrived we went to Synagogue, we went to Shabbat and so on, we prayed. But then...I don't know how we started to go to Orthodox church... (this female came as Jewish, now is Orthodox, involved in Church life, in Russia was baptized in Orthodox Church).*

Data analyses shows an importance of different kinds of contradictions in religious identification:

Religion/Belief: *...I'm not religious, I'm believer...*

God/Bible: *...I don't believe in Bible, I believe in God...*

Atheism/Belief: *...I'm not religious, I'm atheist, but I believe. Because everybody needs to believe in something...*

Understanding of church as a social institute prevails over any other ideas: *...Church is institute which collects money...; ...Church is connected with taxes...; Church is something only formal...*

Previous research experience, especially American religious studies (W. C. Roof, N. Ammerman, K. Wallis, Chr. Smith) gave a basis to consider that religion for contemporary young adults play a role of close community, where they consider themselves as part of something real and meaningful. This idea have been destroyed through German data: *...You come to the Church not to find a community, but you come to the*

God...; ...Here we don't need religious communities because everything is aloud. May be in US they need it, because everything is forbidden there ... They need some groups to meet, to discuss something ... Further research can show if it is contextual European influence or some connection with Russian cultural identification.

Inner belief is an important component of youth religious identification. It is confirmed in works of G. Lynch, N. Ammerman, Ch. Bochinger.

Interviews data confirmed it by the following: *...I belief in God...; ...I belief in Something...;...I belief in Superior Mind...; ...I belief in Some Force....* The most preliminary observation shows that even dominance of individual believe depicted in terminology of Christian world.

РЕЛИГИОЗНОСТЬ ЭМИГРАНТОВ НА ПРИМЕРЕ ПОЛЯКОВ В АВСТРИИ

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Религиозность – одно из ключевых понятий социологии религии, определяющее субъективную установку человека по отношению к религии. Осуществляемые в рамках социологии религии исследования касаются, чаще всего, различных аспектов религиозности, которые в польских источниках описываются, как правило, при помощи параметров религиозности, выделенных Владиславом Пивоварским и включающих: общее отношение к вере, религиозное знание, религиозную идеологию, религиозный опыт, религиозные практики, участие в жизни религиозной общины и религиозную этику¹.

В процессе формирования религиозности человека особую роль играет семья. Как замечает Пивоварский, «...между религиозностью родителей и детей существует сильная зависимость. [...] ценности и модели религиозного поведения, переданные родителями посредством соответствующих упражнений и техник, имеют тенденцию сохраняться в следующем поколении»². Роль семьи в формировании религиозности подчеркивает также о. проф. Л. Дычевский, замечая, что религиозность поляков, ее

¹ Piwowarski, W. Socjologia religii / W. Piwowarski. – Lublin, 1996. – С. 64–65.

² Указ. соч. – С. 108.